

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action mailed on May 14, 2008. Claims 1-24 were pending in the application and all the pending claims were rejected by the Examiner. With this response, claims 1, 8, and 18 are amended and the remaining claims are unchanged in the application.

Drawings

FIG. 4 was reported as allegedly not being in compliance under 37 CFR § 1.121(d). A replacement sheet has been attached to this response, which addresses the alleged deficiencies. No new matter was added to FIG. 4. Applicants submit that the redrawn FIG. 4 is in compliance with 37 CFR § 1.121(d).

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-3, 5-15, and 18-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,953,707 of Huang et al. (hereinafter “Huang”). Applicants respectfully disagree with the rejection, but have nevertheless amended the independent claims to more particularly point out the subject matter of each.

Claim 1 is directed towards a master scheduling system for use by both simulation users and planning users. The master scheduling system includes a first master plan and a second master plan. The first master plan includes actual sales orders and a first user interface. The first user interface is configured to receive simulated sales order from a simulated user. The first master plan then provides an estimated delivery date corresponding to the simulated sales order. The estimated delivery date is calculated based on actual sales order simulated sales order and any other simulated sales order currently entered into the master plan. The second master plan includes actual sales order and a second user interface configured to provide production scheduling and inventory order data based on actual sales orders. The second master plan is

intermittently updated to obtain updated second master plan with new actual sales orders and updated production scheduling data and inventory offering date based on the actual sales orders and new actual sales orders. The second master plan is intermittently copied to the first master plan to replace the first master plan so that the first and second master plans intermittently contain identical data.

The Office Action asserts that Huang teaches all of the features recited in claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree. Claim 1 clearly recites first and second master plans. The first master plan includes both actual sales orders and simulated sales orders from which estimated delivery dates can be calculated. The second master plan includes only actual sales orders. The second master plan is periodically copied to the first master plan to replace the first master plan. Thus, at the time when the second master plan is copied to the first master plan, all previous simulated sales orders are eliminated. At that point, the first master plan contains only actual sales orders. Users can then enter simulated sales orders into the first master plan as needed to estimate delivery dates for the simulated sales orders as if the simulated sales orders were actual sales orders.

Applicants could find no reference to first and second master plans in their reading of Huang, including the portions cited in the Office Action. In fact, it is admitted in the Office Action that Huang does not use the term “master plan”. However, the Office Action asserts that it would have been obvious to conclude that Huang provides a decision support system to develop a production sales inventory (PSI) plan. Furthermore, the Office Action asserts that it would have been obvious to use current sales as well as projected sales to project how different resources will be impacted by changes in projected or future sales orders. Nevertheless, Huang does not appear to teach first and second master plans as is recited in claim 1.

While it may be true that Huang discusses customer sales forecasts, applicants, as mentioned above could find absolutely no teaching of two separate plans with one plan including both actual sales and simulated sales orders and the other plan including only actual sales orders.

Instead, Huang appears to teach only that plans could be adjusted to account for projected sales. Furthermore, there is no teaching or suggestion in Huang that the second master plan is intermittently copied to the first master plan to replace the first master plan. Regardless of whether Huang discusses a system that allows for projecting sales and dealing with inventory issues that may arise from projected sales, Huang simply does not teach the underlying structure recited in claim 1. Therefore, Applicants submit that claim 1 and its dependent claims are not taught or suggested by Huang.

Independent claim 8 is directed toward a method of generating estimated delivery dates and a planning projection. The method includes providing first and second master plans each of which includes actual sales order data indicative of actual sales orders. The method further includes entering a simulated sales order in the first master plan and receiving from the first master plan an estimated delivery date corresponding to the simulated sales order. The estimated delivery date from the first master plan is based on actual sales order data and any other simulated sales order currently in the first master plan. The method further includes receiving from the second master plan production planning data based upon the actual sales order data and not on any simulated sales order data.

As discussed above with respect to claim 1, the Huang reference provides no indication of first and second master plans. Furthermore, Huang provides no teaching receiving from the first master plan an estimated delivery date and receiving from the second master plan production planning data. Furthermore, there is no indication that Huang also provides receiving from a second master plan production data based on actual sales order and not on any simulated sales order data. Thus, as discussed above with respect to claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that the Huang reference does not teach or suggest all the recited elements of independent claim 8. Therefore, Applicants believe that claim 8 and its dependent claims are allowable over the cited reference. Furthermore, independent claim 18 has been amended in a manner similar to that of claim 8. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 18 is allowable over the Huang reference for the same reasons cited above with respect to claim 8. Therefore, Applicants believe

that claim 18 and its dependent claims are allowable. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 4, 16-17, and 23-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Huang and further in view of US Patent No. 6,820,060 of Eisner. Each of these claims depends from one of the independent claims discussed above. Applicants believe that all of the independent claims pending are allowable over the cited reference and that claims 4, 16-17, and 23-24 are allowable based at least in part upon their dependence on allowable subject claims. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In conclusion, Applicant submits that independent claims 1, 8, and 18 are allowable over the references cited by the Examiner. Applicant further submits that dependent claims 2-7, 9-17, and 19-24 which depend from the independent claims are allowable as well. Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-24 are respectfully requested.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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